

LONE WOLF AND CUB

子狼成狼

VOLUME 28

THE LOTUS THRONE

By KAZUO KOIKE
& GOSEKI KOJIMA



子連水狼

LONE WOLF AND CUB



story
KAZUO KOIKE
art
GOSEKI KOJIMA



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THE LOTUS THRONE

By KAZUO KOIKE
& GOSEKI KOJIMA

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V O L U M E

28

A NOTE TO READERS

Lone Wolf and Cub is famous for its carefully researched re-creation of Edo-Period Japan. To preserve the flavor of the work, we have chosen to retain many Edo-Period terms that have no direct equivalents in English. Japanese is written in a mix of Chinese ideograms and a syllabic writing system, resulting in numerous synonyms. In the glossary, you may encounter words with multiple meanings. These are words written with Chinese ideograms that are pronounced the same but carry different meanings. A Japanese reader seeing the different ideograms would know instantly which meaning it is, but these synonyms can cause confusion when Japanese is spelled out in our alphabet. *O-yurushi o* (please forgive us)!

LONE WOLF AND CUB



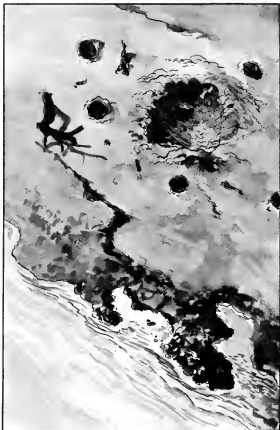
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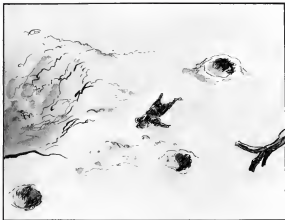
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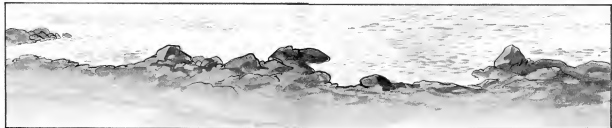
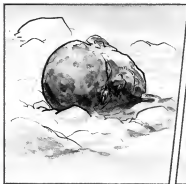


*the hundred and
thirty-eighth*

Corpse Tree













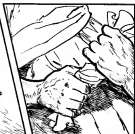












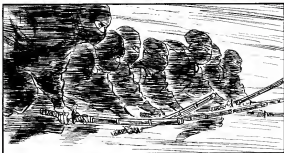










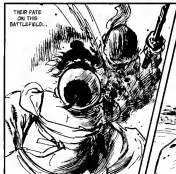








THE LAY OF THE LAND
MAY TILT A BATTLE,
BUT HEAVEN ALONE
DECIDES THE VICTOR.
NEVER WAS IT TRUER
THAN ON THIS DAY.



THEIR FATE
ON THIS
BATTLEFIELD...



...ONLY
HEAVEN
KNOWS.

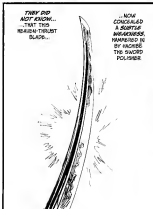
BUT
REFLECTING
FEARFUL...
SPURNING
THE HIGH
GROUND...

THEY
STOOD IN
HANDICAP,
DEPENDING ON
THEMSELVES
ALONE.



THEY DID
NOT KNOW...
...THAT THE
HEAVEN-THRUST
BLADE...

...NOW
CONCEALED
A SUBTLE
WEAKNESS,
HARMED BY
THE SWORD
POLISH.



THEY DID
NOT KNOW...
...THAT THE
WEBS STRUCK
WITH SON-BOUL
SCABBARDS TO
STRESS THAT
WEAKNESS.

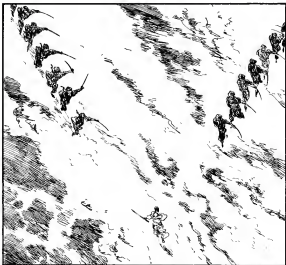


JOSEPH-MURPHY
NOT EVEN
THE DRAGONS
OF ANGELOMARCH
COULD KNOW













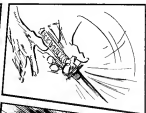




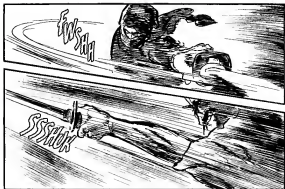






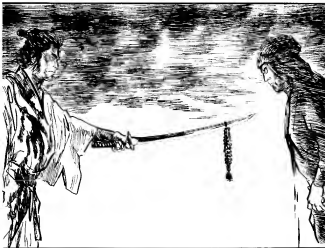










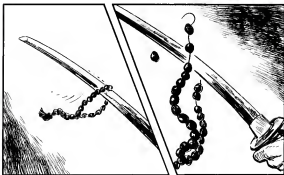
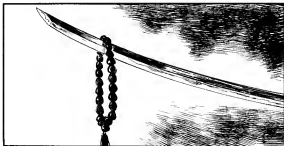




































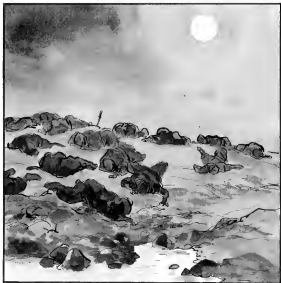




*the hundred and
thirty-ninth*

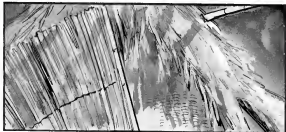
Flute and Wave























DISORD...
WHERE DO
RIVERS GO?



OCEAN

THAT'S RIGHT.
THE RIVER FLOWS
INTO THE OCEAN, AND
TURNS INTO WAVES.
WAVES, SURGING
AND RECEDED,
WITHOUT END.



OUR LIVES
ARE LIKE THE
WAVES. MS. LUIS.
WE DIE. WE ARE
REBORN.



SOON YOUR
FATHER'S BODY
WILL BE A SILENT
CORPSE.

BUT, LIKE
THE WAVES,
MY SOUL WILL
NOT END



LIKE THE
WAVES, YOUR
FATHER WILL TRAVEL
TO THE SHORE OF THE
NEXT LIFE. HIS BODY
MAY DIE, BUT HIS LIFE
IS *ETERNAL*.



YOURS
TOO,
DADDY.

OUR
LIVES ARE
INDESTRUCTIBLE,
IMMORTAL!

THOUGH
WAVES BREAK
AND BLOOD FLIES,
NEVER SAYING
THOUGH MY BODY
FALLS, REVERE
GRAND

THOUGH MY
EYES SHUT, MY
LIPS CLOSE...
DO NOT
FEAR

IN THAT
WORLD OF
REBIRTH, I'M
STILL YOUR
FATHER

IN THAT
WORLD AND
ALL WORLDS,
YOU ARE
MY *SON!*

WE ARE
*FATHER
AND CHILD
FOREVER!*





BUT YOUR
FATHER'S BODY
CAN'T FALL FOR
THE GRASS HAS
WITHERED...
NOT A PASTOR
REMAINS!



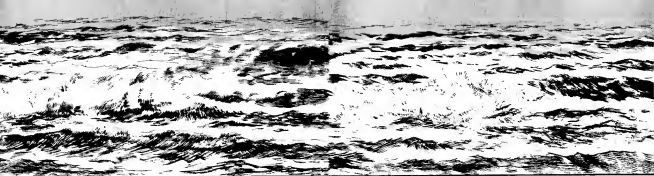
COME, RETSUDO!
SO LONG AS
THESE LIPS
MOVE AND MY
EYES SEE...

...UNTIL
MY FINAL
DROP OF
BLOOD FALLS,
THIS BATTLE
SHALL NOT
END!









































IT'S TIME
TO FALL
THE YAMU
TREE





YOU'VE
DRUNK DEEP
OF MY CLAN'S
BLOOD. YOUR FIRE
POTENCY IS
BROKEN



AND NOW...
THAT WOUND
YOU AND YOUR SON
WILL NOT SEE THE
DAWN. ACCEPT
THIS.



YOUR
CLAN DESIGNED
THROUGHOUT
JAPAN, AND NOW
SEE WHAT'S
LEFT

THE
TRUNK WITHERS
WITHOUT ITS ROOTS.
I CAN TOPPLE
IT WITH MY DYING
BREATH.



TAKE A
SWORD FROM
THE ONE OF
THE BRASS,
ITTO.

THE BRASS
CANNOT REST
IN PEACE IF I CUT
DOWN THE TREE
WITH THEIR OWN
SWORD



A FOOLISH
COMPASSION

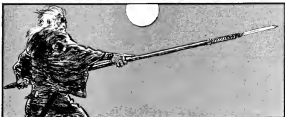
BUT
EITHER WAY,
YOUR LIFE ENDS.
I'LL SAY NO
MORE.



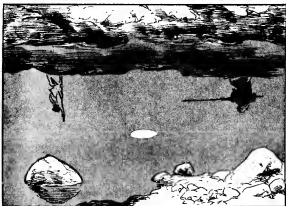




















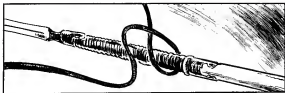






















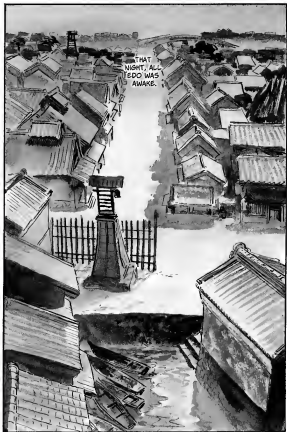




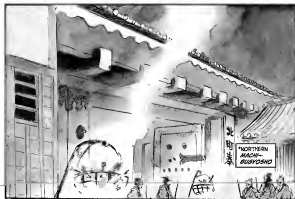
*the hundred and
fortieth*

The Lotus Throne





THAT
NIGHT, ALL
EDO WAS
AWAKE.





THE ALQAP-
JAWHISH
WERE READY
TO MOVE IN
AN INSTANT.





THE FUGU-KA
SHIMPO AND
THEIR RETAINERS
ALL WERE



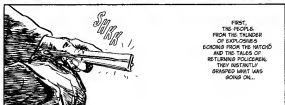
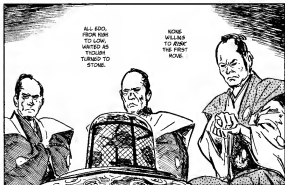


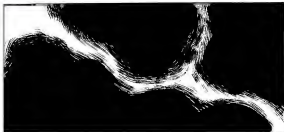


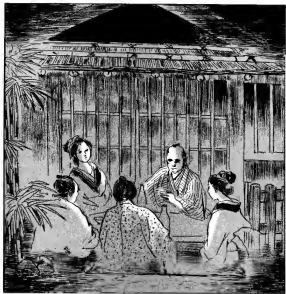
...THE
SACRILEGE
HAD NO
EXCEPTION



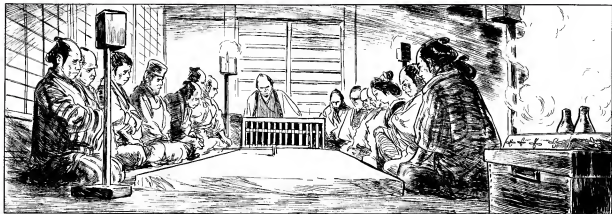




















HAD IT
SEEN A FIRE,
THE PEOPLE
WOULD HAVE
DASHED OUTSIDE
AND RUN FOR
THE HATRED

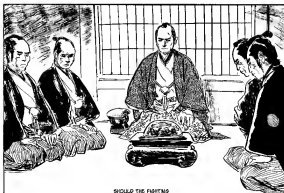


BUT THEY KNEW
THEY FELT IT ON
THEIR SKIN, THAT THIS
BATTLE BETWEEN THE
YAMU AND LONG WOLF
AND GUN WAS SPECIAL,
SOMETHING NOT EVEN
THE POLICE OR
THE SHOGUNATE
WOULD TOUCH

SHOULD THEY
VENTURE OUT,
GET CAUGHT IN IT...
AS THE SAYING WENT,
"IF YOU DON'T WANT
A CURSE, DON'T
TEARP THE GODS"



THEIR POWER OF ARREST STOPPED
AT THE SAMURAI FAMILIES. JONIN OR NO,
GASHI ITTO WAS A SAMURAI
AND KUNYO RETSUO WAS A JONIN,
A DIRECT RETAINER OF THE SHOGUN.
THE MACHIKATA COULD ONLY
WATCH FROM AFAR.



SHOULD THE FIGHTING
HURT THE INNOCENT,
THEN THEY COULD INTERVENE.
BUT THAT WAS CALIBRELY
AND RETSUO HIMSELF HAD
DAMNED THEM AWAY...



THE JAPANESE
AMBASSADOR
HAD THREE
CONCERNS.



ONE, IF BOTSUJIN
WAS IN DANGER,
THEY HAD TO AID HIM.
NOW THAT HE'D REGAINED
THE TRUST OF THE SHOGUN,
SIDING WITH HIM WAS
AN ACT OF LOYALTY TO
THEIR LORD, AND THE PATH
TO PROMOTION.



SECOND,
THEY HESITED
TO CHECK THE
FOURMAN
DIARYS



WITH THE
YABU LETTERS
AN OPEN SECRET,
THE TRUE ROLE OF
THE YABU AND
THE URA-YABU WAS
UNDER CLOSE
SCRUTINY.



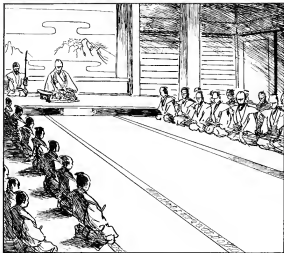
THE FOURMAN'S RESENTMENT
AND SUSPICION TOWARD THE
SHOGUNATE: FUELED BY THE DEED
AND WITH IT, SYMPATHY FOR ODAI
THE ANTI-DAI HAD TO BLOCK
ANY CHARGES THAT BACKED ODAI,
AND TOOK UP ARMS AGAINST
THE SHOGUN



AND THIRD,
THEIR LORD HIMSELF.
NONE COULD KNOW IF
THE SHADOWY WOULD
RIDE FOR THE BAYARD.
BUT IF HE DID,
THEY WOULD NOT
BE AT HIS SIDE.



AND THIRD,
THE COMPOUNDS
OF THE ANTHROPOIDS
THAT NIGHT WERE LIKE
ENCAMPMENTS BEFORE
A BATTLE.







THEY
TARGET
ARE TOO.

THEY'RE
READY TO
FIGHT.



I WANT
YOU TO *HAU*,
ITTO.



A *DEMON* OF VENGEANCE,
ALONE AGAINST THE *HAPPY*
VENDETTA OR NO, HE'S EXPOSED
THE *YABU* LETTERS AND *EDDO*'S
CORRUPTION



HE'S SHOWN
HOW THEY MEAN TO
KEEP US IN *CHAINS*
WE *OWN* HIM.

BUT EVEN MORE...
I *FIRE* FOR HIM.
AS ONE *BROOD* FOR
ANOTHER. AT LEAST
LET HIM *BLOODY*
THE *YABU*, AND THE
SHOGUNATE...







WE'LL REVEAL
ONCE AND FOR ALL HOW THE
YAMATO SPY WAS SCHEMING!
IF WE DEFEAT THE ARMY, WE'LL
RUSH TO OUR SIDE!

THE JAVANES
WILL BACK DOWN!
WE'LL MANAGE TO
LOOSEN HIS
HOLD!

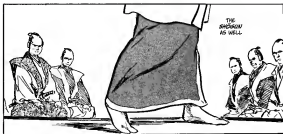


I WANT
TO HELP YOU
TO WIN!

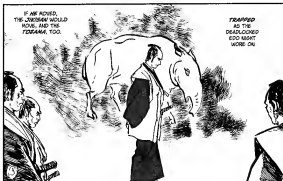
OSAMI
ITTO!
DO NOT
DIE!



WELL AWARE OF
THE JAVANES'S RAGE,
THE JAVANES WAS
PARALYZED, WEIGHING
EVERY MOVE.



THE
SHOGUN
AS WELL.



IF HE MOVED,
THE JAPANESE WOULD
MOVE, AND THE
TOKUGAWA, TOO.

TRAPPED
AS THE
DEADLOCKED
EDO NIGHT
WORE ON.



GET
THE MARCH-
MARCH!







AS MY LORD WELL
KNOWS, UNTIL HE SLEEPS,
THE *GO-KUJO* AND THE
JOKESAN STAY ON
HIGH ALERT.



FULLY
ARMED,
READY TO
RIDE.



THE *FOURAMA*
OHAMMO KNOW IT:
IF MY LORD GOES TO THE
HATCHO, THEY'LL TRY TO
STOP HIM. THE SITUATION
IS A *FUMBERSICK*.



BUT IF MY LORD
SLEEPS, THE *GO-KUJO*
LEAVE THE *JOKESAN* STAND
DOWN AND THE *OHAMMO*
WATCH IN SILENCE.



PLEASE,
MY LORD
TAKE YOUR
REST



WHY?
NO ONE
DARES
ATTACK
ME!

AND
IF THEY DO,
SO BE IT!
WE'LL CRUSH
THEM!



NOT WITH
SWORDS,
MY LORD

THEY'LL
ATTACK WITH
KNIVES



"WHY DID
THE SHOGUN
INTERVIEW ME IN A
PRIVATE PLACE?"
THEY'LL ASK

ALL THE
SAMURAI WILL
WHISPER THAT MY
LORD FORGAVE
THE YAGI
LETTERS



THEY'LL DEMAND
TO KNOW WHY OGURA
WAS DISMISSED. WHY HE
FIGHTS YAMATO-OGURA
IT'S PLAYING WITH
FIRE, MY LORD.



HEM...



THE DISSENTERS
HIDE THEM ON EDGE—
COULD THEY BE HEARD?
THEY'LL LATCH ONTO
THIS, AND ~~ABUSE~~
LET GO.

THE CORNERED
ONE ATTACKS
THE GUEST, MY LORD.
THEY'LL DEMAND
YOU WEAKEN
CONTROL.



HEAR ME,
MY LORD.
PLEASE,
SLEEP.

I BOW
OF YOU...





YET MY MEN REPORT
THAT CHANG'S SWORD
IS ARROWY BLOOD
POURIS FROM A MORTAL
WOUND! IT'S ALL HE
CAN DO TO STAND.

THEN...
RETSUED'S
WOM?



PERHAPS

AND
YET...



AND YET
BETTER?



CHANG
WILL NOT FALL!
HE GIVES BLOOD
WITH DARING
LIGHT!

HE FIGHTS ON,
WITH A STREAMING
SURPASSING
MORTAL MEN
THE BATTLE
IS EVEN.







THIS WILL
NOT STAND,
MY LORD!



IF THEY MOVE,
THE JOKESHA! MOVE!
THE JOKESHA! MOVE!

THE
GO-SHAKU!
CLASH! RUSH!
EDO WILL BE
IN CHAOS!



IT COULD
SPIN OUT
OF CONTROL,
MY LORD
RECONSIDER!

THIS IS A
BLOOD FEUD
BETWEEN MIYAO
AND OGAMI. IF OUR LORD
INTERVENES, HE GIVES THE
FOURMAN THE EXCUSE
THEY'VE BEEN WAITING
FOR. THEY'LL BE
UNSTOPPABLE!



CONFUSED
LET
MOVE!

IF I STAND BY
WILEI HETSUDO DIES,
I LOSE ALL FACE! MY
AUTHORITY WILL BE
SHATTERED!

THE YASHU
ARE OUR PILLAR
LETTERS, THE TOSAMAH...
THEY'RE PROPER! IF WE
CAN'T TRUST OUR PILLAR,
THE ROOF COMES
DOWN!



YES, I DOUBTED
RETSUDO. I EVEN
CONSIDERED FITTING
SHAM AGAINST HIM IN
THE CASTLE TO GET
TO THE BOTTOM OF
THEIR PLOT.



BUT WHEN I SAW HIS
LOYALTY, I WAS SHAKEN.
HOW COULD THE ROOF HAVE
DOUBTED ITS OWN PILLAR?
EVEN IF THE YASHU
LETTERS ARE TRUE...

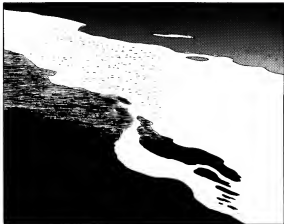


...THE PILLAR
DID SO TO
SUPPORT
THE ROOF.

THE
RESOLVED
TO FIRST
RETSUDO,
NO MATTER
WHAT.











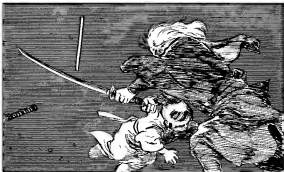




















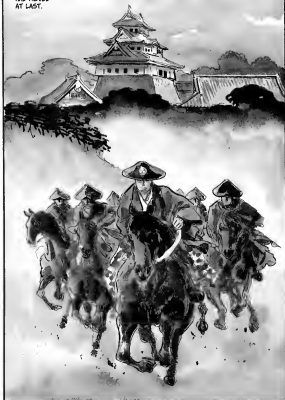


*The hundred and
losty-first*

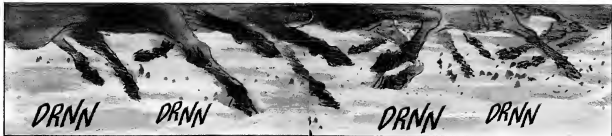
Empty Stirrups



THE SHOGUN
HAD MOVED
AT LAST.













SHIMAZU ARMY
FOLLOWED TO
STOP THEM, THE
JOK-KAMME
RUSHED FOR
THE RIVER



BATTLE WAS
WRITTEN IN
THE CLOUDS

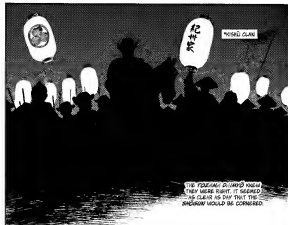






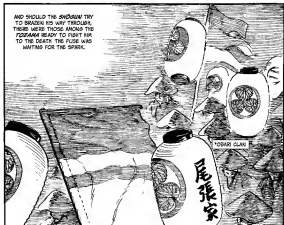
"WE PLEDGED
FEALTY TO THE
FOURTH LORD, NOT
THE KING."

"A VASSAL THAT USES HIS MASTER
IS DISLOYAL BEYOND MEASURE, A
PARASITE EATING ITS HOST. THE
SHOGUN SHOULD CONDEMN THE
SINS OF THE YAMATO AND
PUNISH THEM!"



THE FOURTH LORD KNEW
THEY WERE RIGHT. IT SEEMED
AS CLEAR AS DAY THAT THE
SHOGUN WOULD BE CORNERED.

AND SHOULD THE SHOGUN TRY
TO BRACE HIS WAY THROUGH,
THERE WERE THOSE AMONG THE
FOURTH LORD'S READY TO FIGHT HIM
TO THE DEATH. THE FUSE WAS
WAITING FOR THE SPARK.



THE SHOGUN'S
THINKING WAS
THIS:

—EVEN IF THE TOZUHARA SAMURAI
RODE IN FORCE, THERE WERE
NONE AMONG THEM BOLD ENOUGH
TO TAKE UP ARMS. HE WOULD
FACE THEM DOWN.

THOKKA

THOKKATA

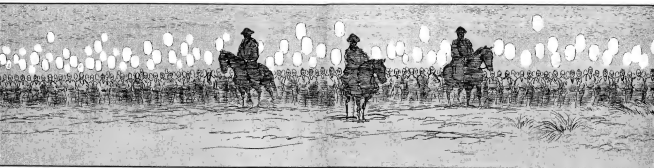
AND THIS, LOST IN THEIR
THOUGHTS, THE SHOGUN
AND THE TOZUHARA, THE
JIKESHI, GO-SAMURAI, AND
MAGNIFICENT...

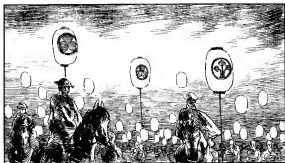
...ALL CONVERGED ON
THE HATOIJI STRAND,
READY TO ENGAGE
INTO BATTLE.

永代橋

"EITA BRIDGE"

而國橋











AWH, NOW
COULD THIS
BE...?

A SIGHT TO OVERTURN ALL
FEARS, ALL CALCULATIONS
OF THE GATHERED HOST...
SO OVERWHELMING WAS
THAT DEATH STRUGGLE.

TEETERING ON THE CLIFF
BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH,
SHOOKING. RAW, NOBLE
BEYOND MEASURE.





RYAAAAH!!

AAH?!







ITTO! YOUR
TRICKS WON'T
WORK ON
ME!

ACCEPT
DEATH!



KANG...







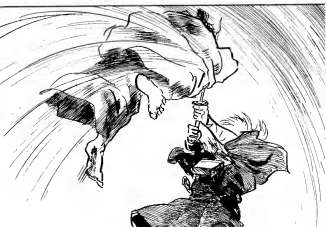




























***SANYŌ SHŌRŌ.**
THE ULTIMATE
COURTESY, THE
HIGHEST SIGN OF
RESPECT.*

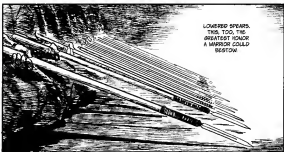


*AT SOME MOMENT,
THE SHOGUN HAD LET
HIS STEELER'S HAND
HE, FOR WHOM ALL THE
WARRIORS OF JAPAN SAT
WITH SANYŌ SHŌRŌ.
SANYŌ SHŌRŌ,
THE "BARBARIC-SUBDUING
GENERAL" HIMSELF...*

THE J-AMPS DISCOURAGED,
THE WARRIORS LOWERED
THEIR SPEARS AND BATTLE
FLAWS, AND KNELT ON
THE EARTH.



LOWERED SPEARS.
THIS, TOO, THE
GREATEST HONOR
A WARRIOR COULD
BESTOW.



THEY COULD NOT
DO OTHERWISE.
SO AWESOME WAS
THIS BATTLE TO
THE DEATH.



















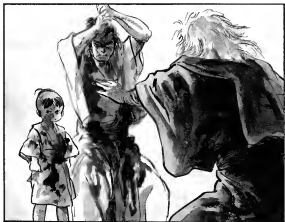
the hundred and
forty-second

Arms









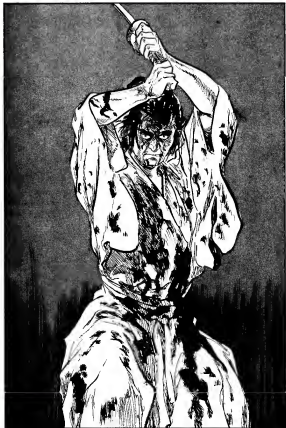






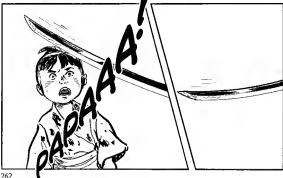


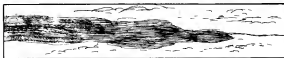




























BRIGHT
ACTING...

THEY DID
NOT BELIEVE
IN YOUR
DEATH.

EVEN I
THOUGHT YOU
WERE DEAD!
BUT DAMORIO'S
EYES DID
NOT.



"THE WISDOM
OF A CHILD,"
THEY SAY.

HOW IRONIC!
THE GODS WANT
YOUR LIFE MORE
THAN MINE...



SUCH IS
HEAVEN'S
WILL!



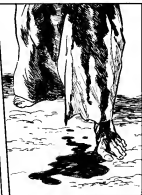










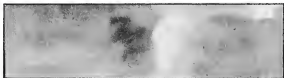


















THE RIVER
FLOWS INTO
THE OCEAN,
AND FORMS
TO WAVES.

WAVES,
SURGING AND
RECEDING,
WITHOUT
SAD.



OUR LIVES ARE
LIKE THE WAVES.
WE LIVE, WE DIE,
WE ARE REBORN.

NOON HOUR
FATHER'S BODY WILL
BE A BURNT CORPSE.
BUT, LIKE THE WAVES,
MY LIFE WILL
NOT END.



LIKE THE WAVES,
YOUR FATHER
WILL TRAVEL TO
THE SHORE OF
THE NEXT LIFE.



HIS BODY
MAY DIE,
BUT HIS LIFE
IS ETERNAL.



YOURS,
YOO,
DAWGORD.



OUR LIVES ARE
INDESTRUCTIBLE.
IMMORTAL!

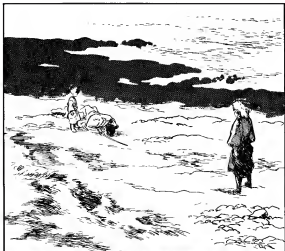
THOUGH WAVES
BREAK AND BLOOD FLOWS,
NEVER SEPARATE. THOUGH MY
BODY FALLS, NEVER GIVES.
THOUGH MY EYES SHUT,
MY LIPS CLOSE...
DO NOT FEAR.

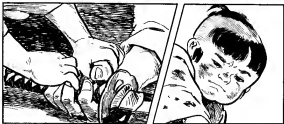


IN THAT WORLD
OF REBIRTH,
I'M STILL YOUR
FATHER. IN THAT
WORLD AND ALL
WORLDS, YOU
ARE MY SON!

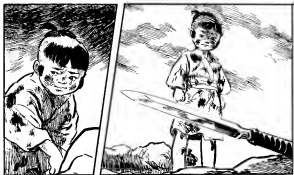
WE ARE
FATHER
AND CHILD!
FOREVER!







































完

The End

GLOSSARY

bakufu

The government. The shōgun, his councilors, and his senior officials.

bushi

A samurai. A member of the warrior class.

bushidō

The way of the warrior. Also known as *shidō*.

daimyō

A feudal lord.

dōtanuki

A battle sword. Literally, "sword that cuts through torses."

Edo

Edo was a castle town, that rose up around the moats and ramparts of Edo castle, the stronghold of the Tokugawa clan. The central core of the city, administered by the *machibugyō* city commissioner, who reported directly to the shōgun's senior councilors, and was demarcated on official maps by a black line, the *kurodōji*, and was called the *go-furui*.

go-rōjū

Inner circle of councilors directly advising the shōgun ("go" is used as an honorific form).

go-yō

Official business. As a lantern carried by the officers of the *senkai* magistrate, the equivalent of today's national police, or as the shout of the police apprehending a criminal, "go-yō" was one of the most dreaded words in the world of Edo Japan's criminal elements.

gōzu mezu

The ox- and horse-headed demons of *mejiomadō*.

han

A feudal domain.

Hatamoto

Daimyō considered utterly loyal to the Tokugawa clan. Their title, standard bearers, came from history when they had ridden into battle with Tokugawa Ieyasu, the first Tokugawa shōgun, even before his decisive victory at Sekigahara.

honorifics

Japan is a class and status society, and proper forms of address are critical. Common markers of respect are the prefixes *e* and *go*, and a wide range of suffixes. Some of the suffixes you will encounter in *Love Waif and Cude*:

dono – archaic; used for higher-ranked or highly respected figures,
saw – the most common, used among equals or near-equals,
sama – used for superiors,
sensei – used for teachers, masters, respected entertainers, and politicians.

Jikisan

Direct retainers of the shōgun, including the hatamoto *daimyō*, and the Yagyū clan itself.

kusa

Grass. In this case, the term refers to the secret ninja living normal lives and serving as spies in towns across Japan, thriving as grass in a field. They serve Yagyū Betsudō and send reports back to Edo.

lotus throne

In Buddhist myth, the place one sits in heaven.

machi-bugyō

The Edo City commissioner, combining the post of mayor and chief of police. A post held in monthly rotation by two senior Tokugawa vassals, in charge of administration, maintaining the peace, and enforcing the law in Edo. Their rule extended only to commoners; samurai in Edo were controlled by their own *daimyō* and his officers. The *machi-bugyō* had an administrative staff and a small force of armed policemen at his disposal.

machikata

Town policemen.

meifumadō

The Buddhist Hell. The way of demons and damnation.

mukuroji

The soapberry: an evergreen with dark, hard seeds. But, in Japanese, *moshuro* also means corpse.

Wikutō

Classic Chinese text on the art of war, said to date from the Chou Dynasty (1100-256 B.C.).

rōjū

Inner circle of councilors directly advising the shōgun.

rōnin

A masterless samurai. Literally, "one adrift on the waves." Members of the samurai caste who have lost their masters through the dissolution of *han*, expulsion for misbehavior, or other reasons. Prohibited from working as farmers or merchants under the strict Confucian caste system

imposed by the Tokugawa shōgunate, many impoverished *rōnin* became "hired guns" for whom the code of the samurai was nothing but empty words.

sankō

The three sub-branches of the Tokugawa Clan. When there was no heir to the main Tokugawa line, one would be picked from either the Ōbari Tokugawa or the Kishū Tokugawa clans, while the *fukuro-shōgun* (vice shōgun) always came from the Mito Tokugawa.

sei-i tai-shōgun

The origin of the word shōgun, dating back to the 8th Century Heian period when the armies of the Imperial Court were still capturing the north of Japan from aboriginal tribes.

shidō

Bashōdō. The way of the warrior

shinobi

A generic term for *ninja*, meaning "one who moves in secrecy." *Ninja* had their heyday in the time of warring states before the rise of the Tokugawa clan. Originally mercenaries serving different warlords, by the Edo period they were in the service of the central government. The most famous *shinobi* were the *ninja* of Iga and Kaga, north of Kyoto. The *Kurokuwa* that appear in *Love Hyō and Cui* were officially the laborers and manual workers in Edo Castle. Whether they truly served as a secret spy corps is lost in history.

tono

Lord, *daimyō*. Sometimes used as a form of address, as in *tono-sama*.

Tozama daimyō

Daimyō who allied themselves with Tokugawa Ieyasu only after his decisive victory at Sekigahara.

KAZUO KOIKE

Though widely respected as a powerful writer of graphic fiction, Kazuo Koike has spent a lifetime reaching beyond the bounds of the comics medium. Aside from co-creating and writing the successful *Lone Wolf and Cub* and *Crying Freeman* manga, Koike has hosted television programs; founded a golf magazine; produced movies; written popular fiction, poetry, and screenplays; and mentored some of Japan's best manga talent.

Lone Wolf and Cub was first serialized in Japan in 1970 (under the title *Kazure Okami*) in *Manga Action* magazine and continued its hugely popular run for many years, being collected as the stories were published, and reprinted worldwide. Koike collected numerous awards for his work on the series throughout the next decade. Starting in 1972, Koike adapted the popular manga into a series of six films, the *Baby Cart Assassin* saga, garnering widespread commercial success and critical acclaim for his screenwriting.

This wasn't Koike's only foray into film and video. In 1996, *Crying Freeman*, the manga Koike created with artist Ryōichi Ikegami, was

produced in Hollywood and released to commercial success in Europe and is currently awaiting release in America.

And to give something back to the medium that gave him so much, Koike started the *Gekiga Senjuku*, a college course aimed at helping talented writers and artists — such as *Ranma 1/2* creator Rumiko Takahashi — break into the comics field.

The driving focus of Koike's narrative is character development, and his commitment to character is clear: "Comics are carried by characters. If a character is well created, the comic becomes a hit." Kazuo Koike's continued success in comics and literature has proven this philosophy true.



GOSEKI KOJIMA

Goseki Kojima was born on November 3, 1928, the very same day as the godfather of Japanese comics, Osamu Tezuka. While just out of junior high school, the self-taught Kojima began painting advertising posters for movie theaters to pay his bills.

In 1950, Kojima moved to Tokyo, where the postwar devastation had given rise to special manga forms for audiences too poor to buy the new manga magazines. Kojima created art for *kami-shibubai*, or “paper-play” narrators, who would use manga story sheets to present narrated street plays. Kojima moved on to creating works for the *kashi-ben* market, bookstores that rented out books, magazines, and manga to mostly low-income readers. He soon became highly popular among *kashi-ben* readers.

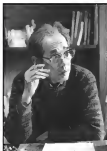
In 1967, Kojima broke into the magazine market with his series *Gojuski*. As the manga magazine market grew and diversified, he turned out a steady stream of popular series.

In 1970, in collaboration with Kazuo Koike, Kojima began the work that would seal his reputation, *Ōkami*

Ōkami (*Love Wolf and Cub*). Before long the story had become a gigantic hit, eventually spinning off a television series, six motion pictures, and even theme song records. Koike and Kojima were soon dubbed the “golden duo” and produced success after success on their way to the pinnacle of the manga world.

When *Manga Japan* magazine was launched in 1994, Kojima was asked to serve as consultant, and he helped train the next generation of manga artists.

In his final years, Kojima turned to creating original graphic novels based on the movies of his favorite director, Akira Kurosawa. Kojima passed away on January 5, 2000 at the age of 71.



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